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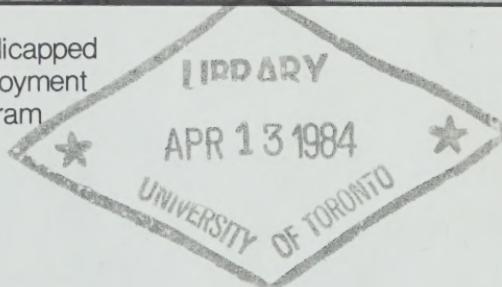
Government
Publications

It's up to you... Disabled people can work!



Ontario
Ministry of
Labour

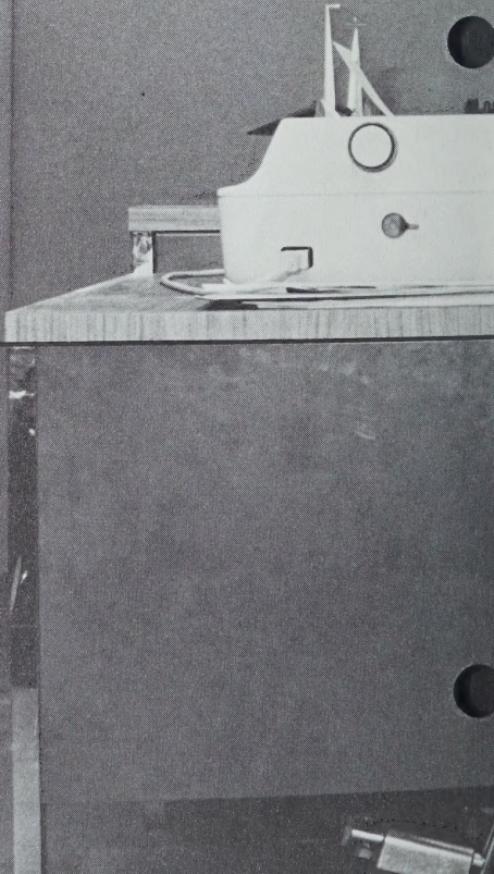
Handicapped
Employment
Program



Job hunting hints for the handicapped

“We must stress
our abilities . . .
not our
disabilities.”

Theme of the
United Handicapped
Groups of Ontario,
Conference on
Employment, 1979.





Employers hesitate to hire handicapped people...

Why?

Often, it is fear of the unknown...

- They're unaccustomed to working with disabled people
- They're unsure of the capabilities of someone who is handicapped
- They question performance in a work situation
- They worry about modification costs
- They assume that absenteeism and turnover will be high.

Changing attitudes...

Employer attitudes...

You can help to change employer attitudes by informing them about your disabilities. It's important to emphasize your...

- educational qualifications
- experience
- job-related skills
- work objectives

Your attitudes...

Your own attitudes are also important. Handle your disability in a positive way and employers will be more receptive to hiring you. You have to believe that you will be an asset to an employer and that productive work is fulfilling.

The Handicapped Employment Program, recognizing that many disabled people want to work and that a variety of job-search skills will increase your chances of finding employment, has developed guidelines to assist you.

What comes first? a good resume.

One of the hardest parts of an aggressive job search is the preparation of a good resume. Style and content can vary depending on the position being applied for, company policy and personal preference.

A good rule of thumb is to visit your nearest library, check the economics and business section, find several books on resume-writing, pick the format that appeals to you and begin.

Make sure that it is easy to read and draws immediate attention to your most important skills and particular achievements. Make it brief...no more than three, preferably two, pages in length.

Under education, it's wise to list all schools or special courses in which you have been enrolled. If you don't have employment experience, be sure to state job-related educational skills such as typing, bookkeeping, etc.

Volunteer experience is an important asset and can tell an employer a great deal about you, so do mention all voluntary or organizational work as per the sample.

Career goals are optional, but if you do have specifics in mind, it's advantageous to mention them, if they're related to the type of work you're applying for.

References, are not always required. It's a good idea to have them ready if requested.

Remember that your resume introduces you and your abilities to a prospective employer...be neat, concise and articulate. Always accompany your resume with a covering letter. Although the sample shown is not the only style available, we suggest you consider it as a guide.

Sample Resume

Personal data:	Peggy McGuire 64 Edward Square Toronto, Ontario K1R M2V telephone 555-3040
Education:	Victoria Park Collegiate— Grade 13, 1969 University of Toronto, B.A., Business Administration, 1973.
Experience:	1973-75—Executive Secretary to the Manager, Right Way Publications. Wrote all correspondence. Liaised, as contact person, between company and authors. Co-ordinated trade shows; chose theme; Arranged booth space.
Volunteer experience:	Cub Pack Leader, 14th Cub Pack, Toronto. Responsible for organizing meetings and expeditions. Reader and researcher for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (C.N.I.B.)
Career goals:	Interested in assuming more responsibility. Wish to move up to administrative position.
Personal References:	Available, on request.

Application check list...

- ✓ Learn all that you can about the company before application.
- ✓ Double check your resume to make sure that you have included all pertinent information.
- ✓ In your covering letter, be specific about the job that you are seeking and the salary range you expect to receive.
- ✓ Arm yourself with a few questions that will show the interviewer that you are aware of the functions of the company.
- ✓ Try to find out the accepted style of dress.
- ✓ Know your positive points and be comfortable with them.

It's ability that counts...

Questions about physical disability or medical status, which may appear on application forms, should be answered when relevant to the duties of the position for which you are applying. Further information, concerning general health, can be obtained later.

However, use good judgement, when specific questions are asked on application forms or at interviews, give information if it is to your best advantage.

The thing that counts on an application form is your ability to do the job. In letters written to employers or in 'additional comments' sections, it is unwise to stress your disability. It's fine to mention it briefly, but do keep it secondary to work related information.

Interview techniques...

An interview has been arranged. Now, **it's up to you** to sell yourself and your capabilities on a one-to-one basis.

Being chosen for an interview is a positive sign, so assume that you are a prime candidate. First and foremost, you must be realistic and aware of the fact that your disability may be difficult for the interviewer to deal with. You can help to ease the situation by being confident. Try not to be nervous; don't fidget; answer all questions as clearly and briefly as possible. If you choose to, or if the interviewer brings it up, be prepared to talk openly about your disability (if you are comfortable with the subject, chances are, the prospective employer will be, too).

The more self-assured you appear, the greater your chances of creating a good, lasting impression. Neatness does count, take particular pains with your appearance, dress conservatively... when in doubt... keep it simple. A positive attitude can help you to achieve employment. Never arrive for an interview late or with a 'chip on your shoulder'. Be willing to discuss any aids that you use. If modifications are necessary, mention them and be armed with possible costs. Be aware of the latest technical advances and acquaint yourself with government assistance which is available to you to help pay for aids or adaptations. Explain that your handicap does not interfere with your everyday work. Share some of the ways that you have devised to cope with your disability.

Remember... it's up to you!

Believe in yourself and your capabilities and, chances are, employers will consider your application. It's up to you to demonstrate...

- that disabled people are valuable employees
- that handicapped workers are efficient and capable
- that absenteeism and turnover is, usually, less than that of co-workers
- that the majority do their jobs very well with little or no adjustment to basic working conditions.

The Handicapped Employment Program, working in co-operation with resources in your community, can help you to find employment.

The Program can provide information about incentives and services that can be offered to employers to assist them in adjusting to your disability.

As we develop local projects, information about disabled job-seekers will be circulated to employers. If you would like to participate, send your resume to this office or work through local agencies.

For more information contact:

**The Ontario Ministry of Labour,
Handicapped Employment Program,
400 University Avenue,
10th Floor,
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1T7**

(416) 965-2321



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